

(c) whether the Government have decided to reduce the pilgrims visiting Mecca during 1997; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMALA SINHA): (a) to (d) The number of pilgrims who have visited Mecca, religious places in Pakistan and Tibet area of China for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra during the last three years is as under:

	1994	1995	1996
Haj pilgrims	25685	30503	50346
Kailash Mansarovar Yatris	370	350	435
Sikh/Sehajdhari and Hindu	5380	5210	5085
Jathas to Pakistan			

2. The expenditure incurred on the Haj pilgrims during the last three years is as under:

Year	Number of Pilgrims	Expenditure	Per Capita
		Incurred (Rs.)	Expenditure (Rs.)
1994	25,685	24.69 crores	9612.00
1995	30,503	17.95 crores	5884.00
1996	50,346	42.02 crores	8346.00

3. In 1996, Government decided to peg the amount payable to Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam (KMVN) by pilgrims at the rate of Rs. 5000/- per pilgrim. The total cost charged by KMVN is Rs. 8250/-. Thus, the Government provided a subsidy of Rs. 3250/- per pilgrim to KMVN towards board, lodge and transport arrangements. Government also provides facilities to pilgrims which include medical assistance, security and escort cover through ITBP and UP State Police, communication links between Delhi and places enroute Indian side as well as in China and a Liaison Officer at Government cost with each batch of pilgrim.

4. In the case of Sikh/Sehajdhari and Hindu Jathas from India to Pakistan, Government extends all required assistance, obtains approval of the Government of Pakistan for the visit of each Jatha; coordinates with various State Governments/Ministries/Authorities and forwards the lists of intending pilgrims to the Pakistan High Commission, New Delhi for visas; arranges with the Ministry of Railways special train services for the pilgrims both for onward/return journey; expedites release of foreign exchange from Reserve Bank of India as a special case in view of the fact that permission for Jathas is given at short notice and visas are stamped on the pilgrims' passports which is one or two days prior to the departure of the Jathas; attaches a Liaison Officer from the High Commission of India in

Islamabad to render assistance to the visiting pilgrims when they contract for any kind of help etc.

5. The Government has not decided to reduce the number of pilgrims visiting Mecca during 1997.

Hepatitis 'B' Vaccination

85. SHRI BRAHMANAND MANDAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are considering to launch Hepatitis 'B' vaccination campaign on the line of Pulse Police Campaign for prevention of jaundice in the country;

(b) whether the World Health Organisation has offered Hepatitis 'B' vaccine at the rate of one dollar per dose;

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to purchase this vaccine;

(d) if so, the number of vaccines proposed to be purchased and the time by which these are likely to be purchased;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the remedial steps proposed to be taken by the Government for the prevention of the jaundice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) It is proposed to include vaccination against Hepatitis-B if adequate resources become available to the Ministry during the IX Plan.

(b) WHO has indicated that the Plasma derived Hepatitis-B Vaccine could be obtained for US\$ 0.5—1 per paediatric dose.

(c) to (e) A decision on this depends on the availability of resources.

(f) Jaundice is the infection of liver which could be caused by any type of Hepatitis Virus. Following measures are being taken to prevent viral Hepatitis.

(i) The screening of Hepatitis-B is mandatory for all blood donations.

(ii) Awareness building for promoting safe sex has been undertaken.

(iii) Guidelines have been issued for the use of a separate sterile syringe and needle for each injection and aseptic surgical interventions.

(iv) Directions have been given for the immunisation of Central Government hospital personnel, who are at high risk, against Hepatitis-B.

State Govts. have also been advised to take similar steps.

(v) Intensive Health Education measures have been

promoted inter-alia conveying messages for use of safe drinking water and maintenance of environmental sanitation.

[English]

Declaration of Backward Area

86. SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Jammu and Kashmir areas which are close to the line of control have been declared as backward and have been granted certain facilities;

(b) if so, the reasons for which border areas of Kathua and Jammu districts have been deprived of such facilities; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN): (a) Yes, Sir. In the year 1981, the Government of Jammu & Kashmir had declared some areas, including the areas within 8 kms from the Line of Actual Control, as socially and educationally backward on the recommendations of the Anand Committee. Subsequently in the year 1998, some more left out villages were also declared socially and educationally backward, based on the recommendations of the concerned Deputy Commissioners. Reservations in Government services and in the admission in professional institutions are provided to these areas.

(b) The Anand Committee had set the following factors as criteria for declaring the areas as socially and educationally backward:-

- (1) Inaccessibility of the area;
- (2) Climatic conditions;
- (3) Geographical position/topography of the areas;
- (4) Low rate of literacy
- (5) Lack of medical facilities; and
- (6) Lack of basic necessities of life, like drinking water, electricity, irrigation facilities, maternity and child welfare clinics etc.

The list of backward areas include 103 villages of Kathua district and 127 villages of Jammu district.

(c) All those villages including those near the Line of Actual Control, which fulfil the above criteria were included in the list of backward areas. The State Government has no proposal, at present, for declaring any more villages as socially and educationally backward.

Plots/Flats to SC/ST

87. SHRI SIBU SOREN: Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS and EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of residential flats, shops and plots allotted to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes by the Delhi Development Authority during the last three years, year-wise and category-wise; and

(b) the details of special housing scheme launched by D.D.A. exclusively for SC/ST applicants, if any?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU): (a) Following number of flats, plots and shops have been allotted by Delhi Development Authority during the last three years; year-wise and category-wise details are as under:-

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Flats:			
SFS	155	138	417
MIG	-	466	1200
LIG	147	651	450
Janata	1522	44	917
EWS	407	-	2102
Shops:	191	255	-

Plots: No, separate record of allotment of plots year-wise is available. However all the persons registered under SC/ST category have been allotted plots and their number is 4994.

(b) Special housing scheme was launched in the year 1989 called the Ambedkar Awas Yojana exclusively for SC/ST applicants.

Haj Pilgrimage

88. SHRI E. AHAMED: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated a fresh scheme for Haj Pilgrimage in the light of experience of irresponsible behaviour of private tour operators towards Hajis in the context of Mina fire tragedy; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALIM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) and (b) Several measures to regulate the activities of private tour operators, in relation to Haj pilgrimage, are Under the active consideration of the Government in the light of the Mina fire incident.